



WHY KNYSNA

- Situated inside the un-gated borders of the Garden Route National Park
- Centrally located to explore the Garden Route
- A wide selection of unforgettable experiences to choose from
- Countless accommodation options available to suit every pocket and need
- The area is a haven for wellbeing and offers wide open spaces, peace and tranquillity
- Planning an event, meeting away from the office, an incentive trip, conference or exhibition? Choose from world class golf courses and health spas to forest hikes, paragliding, cycling, beaches to stroll, swim or surf, paddling, bird watching – the options are endless.

GARDEN ROUTE NATIONAL PARK

The greater Knysna falls within the Lakes section of the Garden Route National Park. With SANParks as custodians, the park has un-gated borders and residents and visitors can move freely to experience one of the most exquisite protected areas in South Africa. Think lush forests, lakes, estuaries and lagoons, 11 splendid beaches, a rich and varied bird, marine- & estuarine life – it’s a nature lover’s paradise.



Sunset on Myoli beach



what’s in a name

Indigenous clans have called this hamlet and the surrounding areas home for thousands of years, long before a tribe of nomadic !Kai Ikorana settled here and named it after their chief, !Nyisna, or the Europeans arrived and christened it *Knysna*.



Groenvlei, Sedgefield

Cape Town		488km (6 hours drive)
		(45 mins by plane)
Port Elizabeth		261km (3 hours drive)
George Airport		70km (1 hour drive)
Johannesburg		1140km (12h35 mins drive)
		(1h45 mins by plane)



Brenton-on-Sea beach



DISTANCES FROM KNYSNA CBD

Belvidere	9km (10 min drive)
Brenton-on-Sea	15km (15 min drive)
Rheenendal	23km (22 min drive)
Buffalo Bay	21km (21 min drive)
Sedgefield	25km (21 min drive)
Wilderness	47km (35 min drive)
Mossel Bay	110km (60 min drive)
Plettenberg Bay	30km (35 min drive)
George	61km (40 min drive)
Oudtshoorn	120km (90 min drive)



KNYSNA



don't miss

- A boat trip on the Knysna Lagoon
- Visiting the iconic Knysna Heads
- Lounging at one of the many lagoonside restaurants
- Walking or cycling in the enigmatic indigenous Knysna forest
- Playing golf on one of Knysna's 3 x 18-hole golf courses
- Viewing the endangered Knysna Seahorse
- Indulging in the local wild oysters
- Watching the perfect sunset over the lagoon



NOETZIE



don't miss

- A unique cluster of stone sand castles which hug the cliffs
- Spending the day on Noetzie beach sunbathing, swimming and appreciating the natural environment
- The Noetzie River is a great fishing spot - listen out for the cry or sightings of Fish Eagles
- Pack a picnic and enjoying the 'outdoor classroom' experience



BRENTON-ON-SEA & BELVIDERE



don't miss

- Walking on the Brenton-on-Sea beach
- Visiting the Brenton Blue Butterfly Reserve
- Hiking the Fisherman's Walk (or a section of it)
- Watching the sunset over the bay
- Visiting Belvidere's Holy Trinity Church (circa 1883), bird sanctuary and the Elephant tree
- Visiting the historic Belvidere Manor for some refreshments at The Bell Tavern
- Stopping at Margaret's Viewpoint to watch a spectacular sunrise over the town of Knysna



BUFFALO BAY



don't miss

- Swimming at the main beach
- World-class surfing and surfing lessons
- Visiting the untouched Wild Side, west of "Buff's" (as the locals call it)
- Walking the Buffalo Bay Hiking Trail
- Visiting the Goukamma Nature Reserve
- Soul restoring beach walks
- The Buffalo Bay 'Boardwalk' of art installations, part of the 'Knysna Interactive Art Route'



SEDFIELD



don't miss

- The Sedgefield Mosaic Route, including a "selfie" stop at the *Love Bug* located at the slipway
- Fishing - avid fishermen have an option of bass-, rock- or surf fishing
- Snorkelling or spear fishing
- Walking on any of Sedgefield's 5 beaches
- Hiking the Goukamma Nature Reserve from Groenvlei
- Visiting the Saturday markets
- Bird watching
- Tandem paragliding
- Watching the sun set at Swartvlei River mouth



RHEENENDAL, KARATARA & BARRINGTON



don't miss

- Visiting the Goudveld Forest – hiking, cycling, rock-pool swimming and picnicking amongst ancient indigenous trees, rivers and waterfalls
- Visiting Totties Farm kitchen for delectable farm style meals, the kid's playground and, every second Sunday, model train rides
- Driving the Homtini and Karatara Passes, part of the famous Seven Passes self-drive road
- Cycling at the Garden Route Trail Park for a one-stop MTB experience for young and old

THINGS TO DO

top 10

- Visiting scenic viewpoints with sweeping views of the most iconic areas
- Taking a cruise on the Knysna lagoon
- Hiking, biking and picnicking in the Knysna forest or many nature reserves
- Enjoying a Knysna wild oyster
- Getting close to an African elephant or discovering the local elephant stories
- Following the Sedgefield Mosaic Route and the Knysna Interactive Art Route
- Spending the day on the beach – swimming, snorkelling, walking & taking surf lessons
- Taking a scenic, gravel road drive to explore more of the area
- Discovering Thesen Harbour Town and the Knysna seahorse on Thesen Island
- Learning more about the local culture – take a community tour, visit the local Rastafarian Village or one of the many informative tours on offer by our local tourist guides



land & air

- Taking a forest hike, cycle or trail run
- Getting close to 800-year-old trees
- Feeling adventurous? Ziplining is an adrenaline rush activity situated in beautiful surroundings. Or try tandem paragliding for some exquisite views of the Sedgefield coastline...
- Playing golf at our 3 internationally acclaimed 18-hole golf courses
- Driving one of the many scenic routes and experience the magic of the forest. Expect spectacular views, some stretching for kilometres ...
- Bird watching – look out for the famous Knysna Turaco (Loerie), Knysna Warbler and the Knysna Woodpecker

water

- Boat outings including catamarans and yachts, sunset cruises, fast paced adrenalin rushing speed trips, or kayaking, SUP'ing, fishing, snorkelling, surfing, sand boarding and kite surfing
- Beach hopping – swimming in the warm Indian Ocean, long leisurely walks on vast and beautiful beaches and castle watching on the famous Noetzie beach
- Swimming in a river or waterfall in the forest, or both
- Whale (in season) and dolphin watching
- Renting a houseboat and overnight on the Knysna lagoon
- Taking a guided Moonlight Meander at spring low tide exploring the rock pools at Gericke's point in Sedgefield

Find more things to do in greater Knysna [here](#)

FOR THE FAMILY



TOP THINGS TO DO AS A FAMILY

Excellent weather, a wide choice of activities that appeal to kids of all ages and great accommodation options make Knysna the perfect family getaway.

- Taking a boat trip on a pirate ship, go whale or dolphin watching or take a sunset cruise
- Beach time – the area boasts some fabulous beaches with loads of activities like swimming, exploring rock pools and mud flats, surf lessons, snorkelling at the rock pools at Gericke's point in Sedgefield or Coney Glen at the Heads
- Experiencing life on the water & stay on a houseboat
- Taking a forest walk, swimming in the river pools & waterfalls, having a picnic and admiring some giant trees
- Paddling, fishing and playing at one of the venues on the Goukamma River
- Visiting the markets in the area
- Visiting the Mosaic Octopus garden in Sedgefield
- Hopping on the model engine train (every second Sunday) in Rheenendal
- Taking a tour with our local tourist guides

RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

The greater Knysna area is located within the boundaries of the protected Garden Route National Park and it is a the ideal place to teach visitors about conservation: how to protect the beautiful areas they visit and the animals they meet for future generations.



wellbeing

- Be active in nature – hiking, biking, canoeing, golfing, surfing, snorkelling, fishing; the options are limitless...
- Feed the soul – beach walks, meditation, yoga, pilates, retreats, panoramic views of the ocean, lagoons, rivers and mountains, sunrises and sunsets
- Choose from a wide selection of holistic health & wellness therapists, spiritual & energy healers, massage & body stress release practitioners and world class Spas to pamper and rejuvenate body and soul
- Medical procedures & recovery options – Knysna has first class medical institutions and where better to recover from a medical procedure than here



arts, community & culture

- Visit the many art galleries in the area
- Explore the local arts & crafts at local markets and galleries in town
- Explore the Sedgefield Mosaic Route
- Follow Knysna's Interactive Art Route
- Follow the Knysna Timber Route
- Expand your horizons on the Judah Square Rastafarian community tour visiting Knysna's 'one love' Rastafari community
- If you're looking for an enlightening and educational activity that supports local, book a community tourist guide to take you to visit the informal settlements, their shacks and lean-tos, spazas, barbershops, bars and Tshisa'Nyamas or other many local experiences they offer

history & heritage

- Explore the forest world of Dalene Matthee's novels
- Dive the alluring Pacquita shipwreck
- Explore Knysna's history through its open 'Historical Society' plaques on buildings
- Visit the San Ambroso Church in Gouna, part of Knysna's Italian heritage
- Visit the fossilised animal footprints at Platbank, Groenvlei
- Explore Knysna's shipbuilding past around Thesen Harbour Town
- Visit the Knysna Motorcycle Room on Thesen Island
- Contact a local tourist guide to take you on an educational central town historical tour or a visit to the many old churches within the greater Knysna area

MEET THE KNYSNA 5

- The Knysna seahorse is endemic to just three Southern Cape estuaries – Knysna, Swartvlei and Keurbooms. It is one of only two endangered seahorse species in the world. Contact a local tourist guide for a tour.
- The Knysna dwarf chameleon is found only in the Knysna Afro-montane forests, and also listed as endangered with the IUCN
- The Knysna Loerie is found only in South Africa and particularly in the Knysna area of the Garden Route
- Knysna is home to one of the rarest butterflies in the world, the endangered Brenton Blue (Orachrysopsniobe)
- The endangered Knysna leaf-folding frog (Afrixalusknysnae) occurs in coastal vegetation including mountain fynbos and forests on the Garden Route

All of these can be found in their natural habitat within the greater Knysna area.

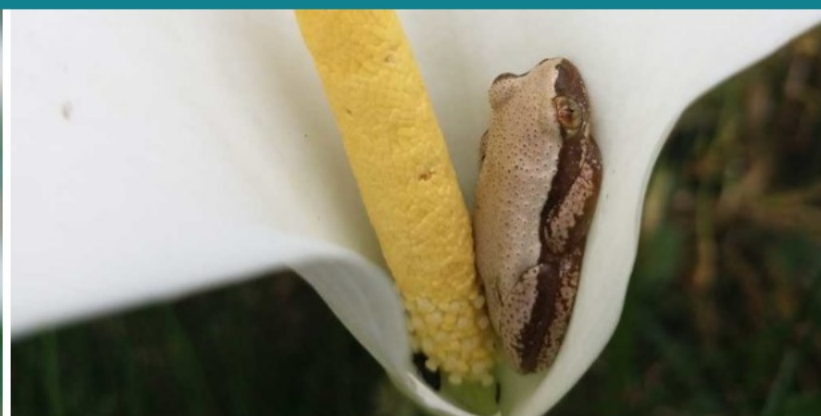
THE KNYSNA HEADS

One of the most prominent geological features in Knysna is fondly known as 'The Heads', which refers to the colossal sandstone headlands which flank the 230m opening of the estuary mouth. It is permanently linked to the sea and some days the opening of the mouth is so calm and glassy that one could quite easily take a leisurely cruise out to sea, while other times waves crash along the entire length of the channel and vessels of all sizes are unable to make the passage to the ocean.



did you know?

The Knysna lagoon is actually an Estuary ... a lagoon is typically shallow and the water flow sluggish; unlike this Estuary, where the incoming tide flows through The Heads at a rate of between 1,000 and 2,000 cubic metres of water per second and reaches 17 km upstream.



shopping

- Knysna Waterfront and small craft harbour: great restaurants & shops, wide variety of boat trips on offer, model trains exhibition- a great attraction for young and old
- Thesen Island Harbour Town: boutiques, quaint shops, art galleries, canoe & bike hire, boat trips and restaurants
- Gray Street Meander for a wide variety of unique shops, coffee shops & restaurants
- Main Road – a plethora of local arts and crafts, malls, coffee shops and charming retail outlets



business

- Business events, conferences, incentive trip or exhibition? Knysna can accommodate you...
- “Your office, just better...” Why work from home when you can work from Knysna #WFK? Fibre internet, online hubs, wide open spaces, fresh air... the only question is “why not?”
- Timber is synonymous with Knysna – explore the Knysna Timber Route for history, artisans and industry info
- Knysna-based boat building yards produce catamarans, monohulls, sailing yachts, speedboats, aluminium pontoon boats, and more
- If you prefer travelling by road, Knysna is also the base for one of South Africa’s most popular motorhome manufacturers, Travelstar
- As the ultimate romantic setting, Knysna is the perfect place for engagements, weddings and honeymoons



Boats at the Knysna Waterfront



Thesen Island Harbour Town



FESTIVALS & EVENTS

Lifestyle, sporting, intellectual, gastronomic, cultural and just plain fun, hardly a month goes by without something extraordinary taking place. Here are some of the main annual events to look forward to:

- Knysna Celtic Festival
- Pink Loerie Mardi Gras
- Knysna Motorshow
- Simola Hillclimb
- Knysna Oyster Festival
- Karoo to Coast mountain bike race
- Sedgefield Slow Festival
- Knysna Timber Festival
- Knysna Heads Marathon road race
- Oakhill Chukka Festival



MECCA FOR THE FOODIE

OYSTERS, SEAFOOD & TEMPTING TIPPLES

- Oysters have been an integral part of the local diet for millennia – just have a look at the oyster shell middens at the Knysna Heads! Today they are served au naturel, or “dressed” in a number of delectable toppings
- Seafood – from line fish like hake and kingklip to calamari, prawns, crayfish and oysters, you’re sure to net something special for any meal
- Craft beers – Taste the locally brewed beers at the Sedgefield Craft Brewery or Red Bridge Brewing company in Knysna
- Gin – The gin of the Knysna Gin Distillery is brewed with spring water from the Witteberg Mountains and natural botanicals including almonds from Sedgefield, honeybush from the Craggs (east of Plettenberg Bay), and num-nums from Knysna



OUR MOUTH-WATERING LOCAL HERITAGE

A melting pot of cultures created an alluring food scene that brings people, food and experiences together. Enjoy delicious vegetarian cuisine – from garden to table – served and prepared by Brother Mau-Mau from the local Judah Square Rastafarian Community. Other traditional dishes like the Xhosa favourite ‘Chicken stew and pap’, ‘Umngqush’ (Samp) or the Cape Malay Cuisine prepared according to the Halaal tradition, can be enjoyed at local Nyama’s.

Stunning vistas of the beautiful surroundings are the perfect accompaniment to your meal, or drink!

Find some options to enjoy both here

A PLACE FOR ALL SEASONS

Knysna is truly the place for all seasons. It has what is called an *oceanic climate* – warm summers and cool winters.

Spring & Summer – September to March

Average temperatures ranging between 23C (73F) and 33C (91F)

High season is traditionally during the South African school holidays from mid-December to mid-January.

Our secret season – April to August

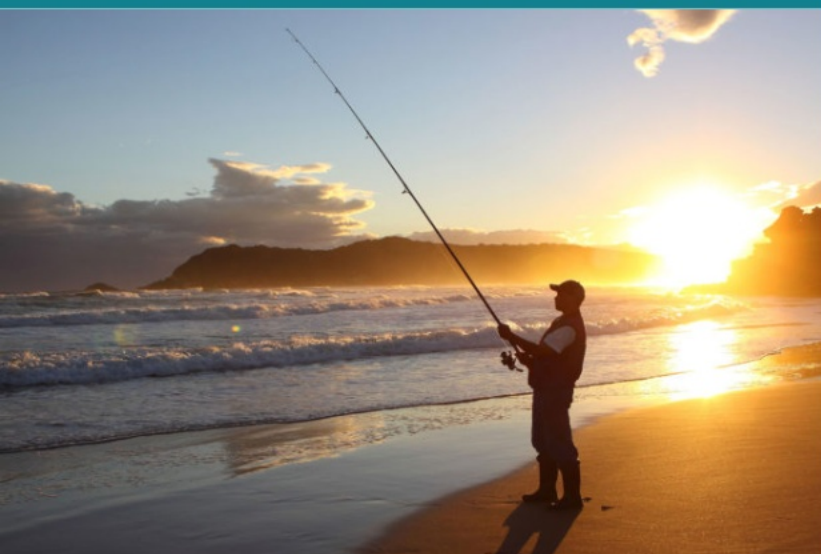
The average daytime high is a moderate 23°C in March, but that barely falls two degrees by May. Night time temperatures may drop, but the days are warm, sunny and very pleasant for outdoor adventures and experiences. It is not the main holiday season in Knysna so there are less people around, making it one of the best times to explore the greater Knysna area!

DEMOGRAPHICS

The Knysna Local Municipality accounts for 12% of the population of the Garden Route District and is a popular tourist destination. Afrikaans, English and Xhosa are the main languages spoken in the area, but most people understand and speak English.

Population 2018 – 73 835

Households 2018 – 23 108



south african-isms

- Braai [br-aye] – If you’re not South African, you probably call it a barbecue. But a *braai* is much more than a barbecue. It’s a whole cultural experience, usually happening during a sports game, or just as an excuse to hang out.
- Eish! [ay-sh] – A Khoi-San expression for when someone experiences surprise.
- Just now – An unknown amount of time – you may be thinking that you know exactly what this means. But, no, even South Africans don’t always know if “just now” refers to a few minutes, tomorrow, or never.
- Gatvol [ghat-foll] – Literally meaning ‘filled to the brim’, this is used to describe someone who is very angry or tired. “He’s gatvoll!” could mean “He’s had enough!”.

CONTACT DETAILS

contact us

Knysna Visitor Information Centre
40 Main Road, Knysna
Opening Times: Mondays – Fridays: 08h00 – 17h00
Saturdays & Public holidays: 09h00 – 13h00
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